



**FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE
OF THE
CENTRAL AREA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD**

Record Number: 3032048-EG

Address: 2000 23rd Ave S

Applicant: Rob Humble, Hybrid

Date of Meeting: Thursday, July 26, 2018

Board Members Present: Sharon Khosla, Chair
Dennis Comer
Azzurra Cox
Jeffrey Floor
Kenny Pleasant

Board Members Absent: None

SDCI Staff Present: Lisa Rutzick for Lindsay King

SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Commercial (C1-65)

Nearby Zones: (North) C1-65
(South) C1-65
(East) C1-40
(West) C1-65

Lot Area: 13,500 square feet

Current Development:

The lot proposed for development includes one parcel containing an existing retail building and surface parking lot.

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The subject site is located on the southwest corner of the 23rd Avenue S and S Plum Street. The subject lot and lots to the north, south and west are zoned Commercial (C1-65). Lots to the east are zoned commercial with a forty-foot height limit (C1-40). The subject site is bound by S Plum Street to the north, 23rd Avenue S to the west, an alley to the east, and adjacent residential developments along the shared south property line. The site is located within the Mount Baker Hub Urban Village and within the Central District Design Guideline Area. 23rd Avenue S is a principal arterial street. The site contains approximately 14 feet of grade change from the south property line, the low point of the site, to the northeast corner, the high point of the site.

Access:

The site has vehicular access from 23rd Avenue S, S Plum Street, and the alley to the east.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

The site has been identified as a Liquefaction Environmentally Critical Area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance application for a 5-story, 139-unit, congregate residence. No parking proposed.

The design packet includes information presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the record number at this website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/aboutus/news/events/DesignReview/SearchPastReviews/default.aspx>

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at SDCl:

Mailing **Public Resource Center**

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000

P.O. Box 34019

Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE July 26, 2018**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The following public comments were offered at this meeting:

- Noted that the Lighthouse for the Blind is nearby, and the sidewalk design should be sensitive to the users frequenting that facility with accommodating design elements.
- Concerned about the coordination with SDOT street improvements underway.

- Expressed strong desire for the project to follow the neighborhood design guidelines that stress the importance of enhancing the pedestrian environment, especially so near transit. This includes sidewalk design, entry points, ground level design features and overall site planning.

SDCI staff also summarized design related comments received in writing prior to the meeting:

- Expressed support for the preferred massing option as it adds some variety to the area.
- Encouraged more color variety besides grey.

Non-design related comments expressed concern with existing parking congestion and a desire for more unit types.

One purpose of the design review process is for the Board and City to receive comments from the public that help to identify feedback and concerns about the site and design concept, identify applicable citywide and neighborhood design guidelines of highest priority to the site and explore conceptual design, siting alternatives and eventual architectural design. Concerns with off-street parking impacts are reviewed as part of the environmental review conducted by SDCI and are not part of this review. Concerns with unit type are not within the purview of the Board or SDCI.

All public comments submitted in writing for this project can be viewed using the following link and entering the record number-EG: <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/edms/>

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

1. Massing:

- a. The Board discussed the merits of both Option 1 and 3, preferring the courtyard and entry configuration facing 23rd Avenue thereby actively engaging the main street, while also preferring the variety of massing and sensitivity to the neighboring sites shown in Option 3. The Board also preferred the fewer ground level units shown on Option 1. The Board agreed that a corner courtyard configuration should be explored that combines the strengths of these two options. (CS1-1a, (PL3-A1 through 4)
- b. The Board did not support Option 2.
- c. The Board agreed that a shifted/turned massing could best achieve the engagement and activation of the streets.(PL2-D1, (PL3-A1 through 4)
- d. In Option 3, the Board was supportive of the traditional feel of the courtyard type of configuration that is found in many older apartment buildings in the area. (CS3-A)
- e. The Board agreed that the common amenity space and entry courtyard should be highly visible and welcoming as viewed from both streets. This configuration also takes advantage of solar access. (CS1-B1, CS1-2a)

2. Orientation of Entry & Connection to the Street:

- a. The Board expressed a strong preference for a building entry that engages 23rd Ave and provides a procession of entry sequencing from the public to the private with an open court at the sidewalk edge moving into a more semi private space at the entry point that activated by the private amenity room and lobby. (CS2-B1, B2, B3)
- b. The Board specifically noted the three opportunities to engage the street: the plaza, lobby and common amenity room. (PL3-A1 through 4)
- c. The Board agreed that the ground level residential units on Plum Street should be designed with a stoop character to engage the quieter, more residential nature of this street. The Board also encouraged coupling entries and providing transparency. These same qualities should also be provided to 23rd Ave should any units be included along that street. (PL3-B2, PL3-1c, PL3-1g, PL3-1i)
- d. The Board encouraged minimizing the number of ground level residential units facing 23rd Ave as this is a busier arterial street that creates a challenging condition for ground level residential to contributing towards activating the street.
- e. The Board noted that they would be open to considering a ground level residential setback such as that shown in Option 1 as part of the suggested hybrid massing scheme. (PL3-B2)

3. Gateway Location & Cultural Placemaking:

- a. The Board noted the significance of this gateway location to the Central Area neighborhood and that the size and location of this building will set an important precedent for new development. (CS2-A1)
- b. The Board noted that the proposed configuration of the open court to the corner is part of cultural placemaking by having a welcoming, activated open space on the most visible street fronts. (A.1-1a through f, A.2-1a)
- c. In response to public comments, the Board encouraged reaching out to the Lighthouse for the Blind as well as local cultural groups to solicit ideas for how the building and ground level design might reflect the community cultural context. (CS3-B1, B2, A.2-1a)

4. Open Space Connectivity:

- a. As discussed above, the Board would like to see a massing option that shows a corner entry courtyard, creating an open space both at the corner as well as along the south side of the site to provide a buffer to the neighbor. The Board also noted that the two open spaces would have very different characters – one being more public and the other more private. (PL1-A1, A2)
- b. The Board was very enthusiastic about the thoughtful manner in which the two courtyards were configured in Option 3 to have a visual connection and relationship between the open space with the lobby and amenity room space. The Board would like to see similar considerations given to the new massing scheme, endeavoring to create a sense of connectivity throughout the site. (DC1-A1 through A4, DC3-A1, DC3-1a)
- c. The Board noted that the activation, functionality and visibility of the corner open space is paramount and may differ significantly in design from the open space design and configuration on the south edge. (PL1-2d)

- d. The Board noted that the safety of this open space will be reinforced by clear sight lines and visibility between the sidewalk, courtyard and amenity room. (PL1-1a, PL1, 1c)
- e. The Board was very supportive of the proposed bike circulation and storage facilities. (PL4-B3)

5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:

- a. The Board was very supportive of the massing gesture of the open space courtyard facing south towards the neighboring site. This open space created variation, light and air and a landscape buffer between the project site and the abutting neighbor. (CS3-A1 through 4)

6. Signage:

- a. The Board was very concerned about the building signage and lack of customization to the neighborhood. The Board stressed that the building signage should create a unique sense of identity for the building residents, rather than just a brand found anywhere in the City. This concern was further compounded by the important gateway location of this site and the lost opportunity for the building expression through its signage to be of the neighborhood. (CS3-B1, B2, PL1-2c, DC4-B1 and 2, A.1-1a through f, A.2-1a)
- b. The Board would like to see a well-considered building signage concept that suggests a residential home and reflects community culture. (DC4-B2, PL1-2c, DC4-B1 and 2, A.1-1a through f, A.2-1a)

7. Materials & Building Design:

- a. The Board looks forward to reviewing a material palette that takes cues from the important neighborhood buildings, such as the NW African American Museum, while recognizing that this a residential building of a very different scale. (CS3-A1-4, DC4-2a and b, A.1-1a through f, A.2-1a)
- b. The material palette should also provide a visual signal the entry into the Central Area neighborhood. (DC4-A1, DC4-2a and b)
- c. The Board suggested that those areas of the building that do not have transparency and may have blank walls, to consider use of color and art to provide visual interest and potentially also contribute to the cultural placemaking encouraged in this design. (PL1-2c, DC2-B2, DC4-1a, DC4-3a through d, A.1-1c)
- d. The Board looks forward to a well-conceived, coherent building design that takes established and enhances the gateway location. (DC2-B1)

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based on the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guidelines priorities and achieve a better overall project design than could be achieved without the departure(s). The Board's recommendation will be reserved until the final Board meeting.

At the time of the **FIRST** Early Design Guidance meeting the following departure was requested:

1. **Residential Setback at Street (SMC 23.47A.008.D):** The Code requires that ground level residential units are located either four feet above or below sidewalk grade or set back at least 10 feet from the sidewalk. The applicant proposes a minimum 5-foot setback for the residential units along Plum Street.

The Board indicated they were open to such a departure provided the suggested massing configuration with an activated, generous, visible entry courtyard is provided, minimizing residential units at ground level on 23rd Ave and instead encouraging these ground level units along Plus Street.

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines recognized by the Board as Priority Guidelines are identified above. All guidelines remain applicable and are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.

CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation

CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind: Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

Central Area Supplemental Guidance:

CS1-1 Local Topography

CS1-1-a. Respond to Local Topography: Respond to local topography with terraces, stoops, stepping facades, or similar approaches. Use appropriately scaled rockeries, stairs, and landscaping to transition between the sidewalk, building façade, and entrances in keeping with local topographic conditions, and existing neighboring approaches.

CS1-1-b. Step Fencing and Screening: If fencing or screening is included in the design, it should step along with the topography.

CS1-2 Connection to Nature

CS1-2-a. Impact on Solar Access: Be sensitive to the project's impact on solar access to adjacent streets, sidewalks, and buildings. Where possible, consider setting taller buildings back at their upper floors, or pushing buildings back from the street and providing wider sidewalks so sunlight can reach pedestrian level spaces and neighboring properties. Ensure sunlight reaches building entrances whenever possible.

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.

CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes

CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together: Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design: Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods: In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site, and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods: In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

CS3-B Local History and Culture

CS3-B-1. Placemaking: Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

CS3-B-2. Historical/Cultural References: Reuse existing structures on the site where feasible as a means of incorporating historical or cultural elements into the new project.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.

PL1-A Network of Open Spaces

PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space: Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

PL1-A-2. Adding to Public Life: Seek opportunities to foster human interaction through an increase in the size and quality of project-related open space available for public life.

Central Area Supplemental Guidance:

PL1-1 Accessible Open Space

PL1-1-a. Safety & Connectivity: Provide safe and well connected open spaces. Utilize walkways and linkages to connect pedestrian paths with neighboring projects, shared space, and public spaces visually and physically such as streets. Use linkages to create and contribute to an active and well-connected open space network.

PL1-1-c. Transparent Indoor Community Spaces: Incorporate transparent and open indoor community meeting spaces at the ground level of larger projects. Avoid having any window coverings or window film that permanently obscure views into or out of the space.

PL1-2 Connection Back to the Community

PL1-2-c. Lighting, Art, and Special Features: Enhance gathering places with lighting, art, and features, so that the scale of the art and special features are commensurate with the scale of the new development.

PL1-2-d. Common & Accessible Open Spaces: Ensure exclusive rooftop, private, or gated open spaces are not the only form of open space provided for the project. Prioritize common, accessible, ground level open space at the building street fronts and/or with courtyards that are not restricted or hidden from street views.

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-D Wayfinding

PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding: Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-1. Design Objectives: Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

PL3-A-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

PL3-A-3. Individual Entries: Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

PL3-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-2. Ground-Level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

Central Area Supplemental Guidance:

PL3-1 Frontages

PL3-1-c. Promote Transparency: Promote transparency and “eyes on the street.” No reflective or obscure glass should be used. Discourage retailers from putting display cases or window film up against windows to maintain transparency into commercial spaces.

PL3-1-g. Couple Entries: At residential projects, provide coupled entries where possible to foster a sense of community and visual interest in building entryways. Provide generous porches at these entries to encourage sitting and watching the street.

PL3-2 Streetscape Treatment

PL3-2-i. Porches and Stoops: Porches and stoops are the life of the street. Encourage human activity by providing opportunities for neighbors to connect, walk, and talk together on the sidewalk.

PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.

PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists

PL4-B-3. Bike Connections: Facilitate connections to bicycle trails and infrastructure around and beyond the project.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

DC1-A-3. Flexibility: Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable,

include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

1. area, follow guidance provided in frontage section (PL3-I).

DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.

DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship

DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit: Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

Central Area Supplemental Guidance:

DC3-1 Common Open Spaces

DC3-1-a. Visible and Accessible Common Courtyards: Where possible, provide common courtyards and yards that are publicly visible and accessible. These spaces should be activated and layered, so that there is a graduation from private outdoor space, to the fully shared realm.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high-quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-B Signage

DC4-B-1. Scale and Character: Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design: Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project, in addition to the surrounding context.

Central Area Supplemental Guidance:

DC4-1 Screening

DC4-1-a. Artistic Opportunity: When screening or fencing is used, it should be designed as an artistic opportunity.

DC4-1-b. Allow for Views: Design screening height, porosity, and materials to allow for views in and out of the site, and visual interaction with the public realm.

DC4-2 Building Materials

DC4-2-a. Reinforce Local Cultural References: Consider vibrant and bold uses of color, materials, texture, and light to reinforce local cultural references.

DC4-2-b. Variation and High-Quality Materials: Encourage variation in building materials and employ high quality materials.

DC4-2-c. Reuse Building Materials: Salvage building materials from the site when possible. If reusable materials, such as brick, are removed from demolished buildings, use them in the new development as visible building components.

DC4-3 Building Details and Elements

DC4-3-a. Natural Ventilation: Provide operable windows in a way that promotes natural ventilation.

DC4-3-b. Reflect Human Scale and Craftmanship: Incorporate building materials and details that reflect human scale and the artisanship of the building process (ex: use of brick or wood for exterior cladding).

DC4-3-c. Add Human Scale and Façade Texture: Incorporate elements such as bay windows, columns, and deep awnings which add human scale and façade texture.

DC4-3-d. Exhibit Rhythm and Transparency: Façades should exhibit a rhythm of fenestration, and transparency of the inside program out to the public realm.

Central Area Supplemental Guidance:

A.1-1 History and Heritage

A.1-1-a. Express African and Black American Presence: Provide design features to express the African and Black American presence within the neighborhood. Create 'pockets of culture' to represent both the Black American identity within the Central Area, as well as other heritages that have had a large impact on the Central Area's past.

A.1-1-b. Include Visual Arts in the Design Concept: Consider including visual arts as an integral part of the design concept along main street building façades, within highly trafficked pedestrian areas, and within open spaces.

A.1-1-c. Cover Blank Walls with Art: Use any resulting blank walls and surfaces for the visible expression of art that references the history, heritage, and culture of the community.

A.1-1-d. Interpretive Storytelling: Include interpretive opportunities (through visual art, signage, markers, etc.) that tell the story of the neighborhood's history in engaging ways.

A.1-1-e. Reflect Racial, Economical and Multi-Generational Character: Encourage the building design to reflect the racial, economical, and multi-generational character of the community.

A.1-1-f. Support the Black Veteran Community: Developments are encouraged to provide housing and/or amenities for the Black Veteran community.

Central Area Supplemental Guidance:

A.2-1 Cultural Placemakers

A.2-1-a. Emphasize Cultural Placemakers: Emphasize Cultural Placemakers within the community. The Cultural Placemaker map identifies several key intersections in the Central Area that serve as cultural anchors for their surrounding areas. Projects at these corner locations should stimulate activities and create visual interest to enhance the Central Area's identity and a sense of arrival, such as:

1. Providing street furniture, public art, landscape elements, pedestrian lighting, mosaics, varied paving patterns, etc.
2. Creating façade enhancements at prominent building corners.
3. Creating a building layout and setbacks that provide opportunities for open space that expand the usable space beyond the width of the sidewalks.

4. Providing larger landscape buffers at placemakers along heavier trafficked streets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the FIRST EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended the project return for another meeting in response to the guidance provided.